# APPENDIX D

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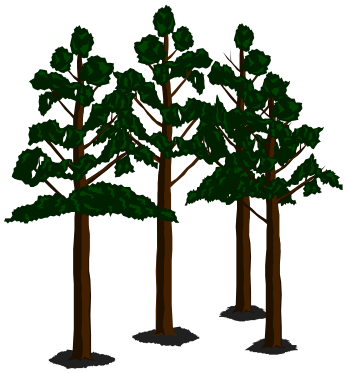
## Environmental Implications

Several urban and rural areas have air pollution problems. Part of this pollution can be attributed to transportation. In 1990, Congress amended the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA). Under the amended law, MPOs responsible for regional transportation planning, and air quality districts in non-attainment areas, must jointly submit State Implementation Plans (SlPs) that show how they intend to achieve the federal air quality standards. Under the CAA, MPOs must demonstrate that their long-range transportation plans and programs conform to the SlPs and ultimately the CAA. Increased use of transit, increasing the average number of occupants per vehicle, use of cleaner fuels, and the use of emissions inspections may all be needed to improve the state's air quality. With the high growth in Ada and Canyon counties, additional control measures and strategies may be needed.



Demand for water and developable land will increase as the population grows. Because a large proportion of growth will occur in southern Idaho, demand for water will increase significantly despite aggressive water conservation programs. The increase in water demand will intensify competition between the urban sector, agriculture, hydro-electric power, and environmental needs. The results of this competition will influence where development occurs and where new transportation services and facilities are required. The current, or planned, availability of transportation facilities can, in turn, influence the timing and locations of new residential, commercial, and industrial development.

As growth pressures increase, the development of waste disposal sites will become a significant issue. These landfills hold non-hazardous municipal, industrial, and commercial non-liquid waste. As these landfills reach capacity, counties will need to transport their waste to other, more distant sites. This waste transport will contribute to traffic congestion, air quality problems, and degradation of roadways unless responded to as part of an overall transportation system improvement program.

Transporting hazardous materials poses a risk to the state's population, natural environment, and infrastructure. Over the years, Idaho has experienced spills of toxins during their transport by rail, pipeline, and truck. When incidents do occur, environmental damage, congestion, and delays result.

The ISTEA requires the consideration of environmental implications of implementing the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in the ITP. Since it is a policy plan, an environmental impact report is not required pursuant to state and federal environmental laws. Regional transportation plans, local general plans, land use plans and decisions, and specific transportation project or service actions are subject to the full requirements of NEPA and the full range of related environmental protection,

regulation and permit laws, regulations, policies and requirements.

Demand for mobility will continue to grow as Idaho's population increases. In particular, high growth rates are expected in southwest Idaho and in northern Idaho; consequently, social, commercial, and recreational needs will also grow. Failure to provide adequate mobility will have adverse impacts on Idaho's social structure. The manner in which mobility needs are met can have adverse or positive effects on Idaho's diverse natural environment. The following examines some of the implications of implementing the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in the ITP.

The ITP proposes that mobility demands be addressed by a series of actions. Demand reduction strategies should be considered first to reduce congestion on the existing transportation infrastructure and need for new facilities. Improvements of the existing transportation system will be made to increase its ability to better serve existing and new demands. Modal alternatives for personal and commercial mobility will be provided. Finally, only those new facilities which are truly needed will be constructed. Corridor preservation policies and actions will be initiated where future high density corridors are planned. This approach reduces the magnitude of physical disturbance to the natural environment caused by new transportation facilities from that which might otherwise occur absent these policies and strategies. More efficient operation of the existing system can reduce congestion, or at least the rate of growth of congestion, and in turn help alleviate adverse affects of air pollution, safety and lost-time personal stress.

The ITP proposes coordination of local and regional transportation and land use planning. Driven by a good economy and high population growth, the state's transportation system is shaped by suburban growth and the emergence of "edge" cities. The ITP proposes consideration of transportation early in the land use planning process to promote development patterns which minimize the need for unnecessary vehicular travel and lend support to transit usage. If the land use policies and strategies in the ITP are implemented at the local level and integrated with regional growth management and transportation plans, the impacts on the natural environment from land development and the transportation system will be less than would otherwise occur.

The ITP calls for careful attention to environmental concerns and constraints and public input in the regional transportation planning process. The development of the ITP requires active participation of state and local transportation providers, the public, environmental interest groups, and state and federal regulatory agencies. A Memorandum of understanding has been signed by ITD, the Department of Fish and Game, and other state and federal agencies relative to the NEPA and Clean Water Act Section 404 permitting process that identifies agency roles in the selection and approval of transportation corridors. The ITP calls for some new transportation facilities to be considered. The environmental issues and trade-offs will be addressed in feasibility and project analysis reports.